

## Message Text

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ACTION PC-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 AID-05 SS-15 SP-02 ABF-01 /040 W

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R 291043Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0534

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DEPARTMENT PASS PEACE CORPS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, NG

SUBJECT: PEACE CORPS 1976 BUDGET

REF: STATE 14799, NIAMEY 1576

1. BECAUSE OF CONSTRAINTS ON PEACE CORPS 1976 BUDGET AS OUT-LINED REFTTEL WE HAVE LAUNCHED OUR OWN REVIEW OF PEACE CORPS PROGRAM FOR NIGER AS IT FITS INTO OVERALL US INTERESTS IN THIS SAHELIAN COUNTRY. IN OUR VIEW THIS ASSESSMENT FULLY SUPPORTS DEPARTMENT'S POSITION THAT LEVEL OF PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DETERMINED ON COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY BASIS RATHER THAN BY ACROSS-THE-BOARD FORMULA. WE BELIEVE STRONG CASE CAN BE MADE TO HOLD LINE BOTH ON LEVEL OF PROGRAM AND GON'S CONTRIBUTION IN KIND.

2. FIRST, IT IS SATISFYING TO REPORT THAT PEACE CORPS PROGRAM IN NIGER IS UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS FROM POINT OF VIEW OF US INTERESTS, THOSE OF VOLUNTEERS AND OF NEEDS OF THIS DESPERATELY POOR COUNTRY STRUGGLING WITH SOME SUCCESS TO RECOVER FROM EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AND ACHIEVE GREATER SELF-SUFFICIENCY. IN NIGER, VOLUNTEERS ARE MOST VISIBLE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN

COUNTRY AND THEY ARE KEY ELEMENT IN CONTRIBUTING TO OUR GENERALLY HARMONIOUS AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH NIGER.

3. IT IS RELEVANT TO NOTE THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER COUP WHICH BROUGHT PRESENT GOVERNMENT TO POWER YEAR AGO, RANKING MEMBERS

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OF SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL (SMC) CALLED PC OFFICE TO INFORM

THEM THAT RESTRICTIONS ON TRAVEL, ETC., IMPOSED AT TIME OF COUP DID NOT APPLY TO PCV'S BECAUSE SMC KNEW THEY HAD BUSINESS TO DO AROUND COUNTRY AND SHOULD PROCEED WITH IT NORMALLY. SMC HAS ALSO DEMONSTRATED ITS SUPPORT FOR PEACE CORPS AT TIME WHEN IT IS TRYING NIGERIANIZE ITS SERVICES AND REDUCE FOREIGN PRESENCE IN INTERIOR BY UPPING ITS DEMANDS FOR VOLUNTEERS. THIS ENDORSEMENT OF PEACE CORPS BY GON RESULTS FROM REAL NEED FOR VOLUNTEER TALENT IN VARIOUS FIELDS AS WELL AS GENUINE APPRECIATION ACHIEVEMENTS OF PCV'S AT LOCAL LEVEL OFTEN UNDER VERY SPARTAN CONDITIONS. THIS GRASS-ROOTS APPROACH REPRESENTS PRECISELY TYPE OF WORK ETHIC AND DEDICATED RURAL SERVICE WHICH PRESIDENT AND NEW GOVERNMENT ARE TRYING TO INSTILL IN NIGERIAN YOUTH IN HEALTH, AGRICULTURAL AND RELATED FIELDS. PEACE CORPS THUS SERVES AS EXAMPLE AND ALLY IN THESE EFFORTS.

4. A FURTHER MEASURE OF GON'S INTEREST IN PEACE CORPS IS SIZE OF ITS HOST GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL IS LARGEST PERCENTAGE OF ANY SAHELIAN COUNTRY. PC PROGRAM IN NIGER TOTALS \$786,800. IN ADDITION NIGER CONTRIBUTES ABOUT \$205,000 IN HOUSING, HEALTH CARE, VEHICLES, FACILITIES FOR TRAINING PROGRAMS, PLUS SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE AS WELL AS PERCENTAGE OF SALARY OF GON PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO PEACE CORPS ACTIVITIES. GIVEN NIGER'S IMPOVERISHED CONDITION, THIS CONTRIBUTION OF 26 PERCENT OF TOTAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION IS REMARKABLE COMMITMENT AND WE DO NOT THINK IT RIGHT OR FAIR TO ASK GON TO INCREASE ITS SUPPORT. IT SEEMS CONTRADICTORY TO PUMP DEVELOPMENT FUNDS INTO ONE OF POOREST OF 25 MSA COUNTRIES AND AT SAME TIME DEMAND GREATER LEVEL OF IN-COUNTRY SUPPORT.

5. REFLECTING US PRIORITIES IN THE SAHEL, PEACE CORPS IS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN DROUGHT RECOVERY PROJECTS. SEVERAL MAJOR PEACE CORPS DROUGHT RELIEF PROGRAMS ARE CURRENTLY BEING FUNDED BY USAID AS WELL AS BY PRIVATE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES ALSO WORKING IN THIS AREA. PROPOSALS FOR ADDITIONAL PC PROGRAMS INVOLVING AID FUNDING HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP AND SUBMITTED TO PC/WASHINGTON.

6 WE CONCLUDE THAT (A) PEACE CORPS NIGER IS A SUCCESS AND ENHANCES US IMAGE IN THIS PART OF AFRICA (SEE FOR EXAMPLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECENT COMMENTS OF FONMIN DJERMAKOYE ON PCV'S -NIAMEY 1576); (B) PROGRAM HAS STRONG GON SUPPORT DEMONSTRATED BY SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION IN KIND AND WELL-CONSIDERED REQUESTS FOR ENLARGED PROGRAM; (C) PC IS POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO US INTEREST IN AREA AND MERITS AS MUCH USG SUPPORT AS CAN BE MOBILIZED.

7. WE RECOMMEND THAT (A) WE BE AS RESPONSIVE AS POSSIBLE

TO GON REQUESTS FOR VOLUNTEERS; (B) IN VIEW SPECIAL PRIORITIES  
ATTACHED TO MSA COUNTRIES AND TO SAHEL RECOVERY, MAINTAIN  
SAME LEVEL OF VOLUNTEERS AS IN FY 75, HOLD LINE ON GON'S  
CONTRIBUTION IN KIND AND CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL  
VOLUNTEERS ON CASE-BY-CASE BASIS MEASURED AGAINST PRIORITIES  
ATTACHED TO SAHELIAN COUNTRIES LIKE NIGER.HECK

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 29 APR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** SmithRJ  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION PC  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
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**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 STATE 14799, 75 NIAEMEY 1576  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** SmithRJ  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 27 AUG 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <27 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <15 DEC 2003 by SmithRJ>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PEACE CORPS 1976 BUDGET  
**TAGS:** EAID, ABUD, NG, PC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006